

the Emily

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ECOFEMINIST RUNS FEDERALLY



Photo by L. McLagan

By Katherine Anne Sudol

Laura Porcher is challenging status-quo candidates in the Victoria riding for a position as MP in the upcoming Nov. 21st federal election. Her platform is firmly rooted in emphasizing the connection between violence toward the environment and violence toward women.

"The world is in crisis," says Porcher. "I plan to present a comprehensive program to create a peaceful, just and sustainable world." Practically speaking, this program is based on Porcher's masters degree in Resource Management, her experience as a university instructor, and as an International Development Educator.

While the following is but a small part of her fully developed

platform, the specifics are impressive: a Stop Rape campaign including a ban on violent pornography and sexism in advertising; full support of women for assault centres and transition homes; comprehensive sewage and recycling programs; universal quality non-profit daycare in the home, community and workplace; a Nuclear Free Canada; and, "Reallocation of the defense budget to environmental protection, child care, and affordable family and special needs housing; this is where our real security is."

With the global environmental situation becoming increasingly critical, more and more people are looking for ways to address ecological problems. Porcher's experience and knowledge of these issues can provide Victorians many practical solutions.

Ed note: Upcoming all-candidates meetings: Wed. Nov. 2, 7:30 p.m., Begbie Bldg.; Thurs. Nov. 10, 7:30 p.m., Fernwood Community Centre, 1240 Gladstone; Tues. Nov. 15, 7:00 p.m., Camosun College Fischer Bldg. Auditorium. Nov. 15 meeting is specifically for addressing women's issues. And remember to get out and vote!



NFB DIRECTOR COMES TO UVIC



By Sue Cardinell

Renowned Canadian film director Anne Claire Poirier was at Cinecenta, Oct. 13, to personally introduce two of her more controversial works. *They Call Us "Les Filles Du Roy"*, a 1973 docu-drama outlining the history of Quebecois women perhaps was overshadowed by the second viewing, Poirier's 1979 film, *A Scream From Silence*. The latter subjects the audience to a shockingly graphic experience of rape through the eyes of a survivor.

As though to set the background for this disturbing piece, the first film, *They Call Us . . .*, spans the lives of working women from the first French-bride settlers to the 1970's pink-ghetto workers of Quebec. Within this context, conditions of oppression appear relatively unchanged for women.

One young bride tells how she was chosen to go to

Canada because she was "courageous, strong and of comely appearance." Yearly pregnancies and the unrelenting daily workload of a pioneer wife were what she and her sisters could look forward to. Poirier reminds us that all too often two full-time jobs were expected from these women (sound familiar?). Added regularly to their domestic chores came the responsibility of extra farm work while husbands went off to trap furs for weeks or months on end.

Hundreds of years later, Poirier finds women relegated to much the same style of work with few new options. To scenes of women labouring in textile factories, or toiling as key-punch operators and waitresses, a narrator reads employment ads, "Waitress wanted: attractive . . ."

In the making of *A Scream From Silence* Poirier explains her initial challenge of how to approach the subject of rape: "I decided on a subjective approach." Indeed! We see the as-

sailant raise his fist, then the screen cuts to an instant of black.

We witness from an all too realistic angle the agony that the main character must endure, which continues throughout the events portrayed in the few months that follow: humiliating scrutiny from health care officials, police officers and medical photographers.

Poirier intersperses this with flashes of graphic footage from the past. Along with scenes of clitoridectomy being performed, we watch women running from soldiers; running from the added dimension of rape that women during war-time have always faced.

In our country, where exploitation of women's work and violence against women and children still exist, it is our good fortune that hard work and talent found Poirier heading numerous productions of the National Film Board. Brave exposés such as *A Scream From Si-*

lence and *They Call Us "Les Filles Du Roy"* reclaim women's shared experiences while reminding us of the work that still needs to be done. * * *

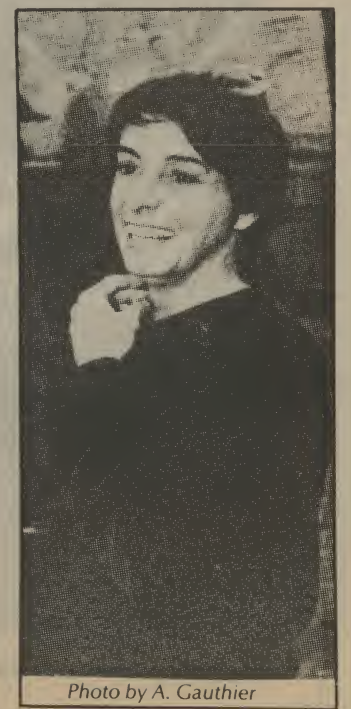


Photo by A. Gauthier

Well . . . you missed a cultural event at — can you believe it? — Squeaky's Laundromat. There's nowhere else in town that you can see the manager playing bongos, washers and dryers with names, MTV, and white gowned laundrologists. An alternative arts scene,

complete with graphic art, live music by a number of different people, and a reading of the following story were just a few of the highlights Friday, Oct. 7 on Shelbourne Street. These events happen about once a month, so keep your eyes open, and don't forget your laundry!

THE PAJAMAS

By N. J. Morris

It could have been a Saturday when she found them pushed to the back of the middle drawer of her childhood dresser: a warm clear afternoon in the midst of the ripest part of fall.

She was distracted, had slept late, and had awoken encapsulated still in the fog of sleep. She drank a coffee and felt still hazier, read a magazine article that only backed up her anxiety. She had very little money, and yet she had to fight off the crying urge of boredom to walk like a consumer to the bookstore.

She started with the telephone, brushed off the dust and debris with a kleenex left on the table. She filled the sink full of dishes, and fed the cats the scraps from the table. The dresser drawer was unwillingly closed in the back of her mind.

Down the hall from the kitchen was the bedroom. She opened the top drawer first to push in a fragment of sock sticking out. The middle drawer opened next. And, reflexively, like picking up a soft shell of glass from the beach, she pulled them out. She heard her heart beat. And looked up and down the hall to the front door. She was alone.

They were pajamas. Over-sized Taiwan-made pajamas. Flannel, a paisley blue-grey. The top was torn with love, the pocket nearly off. The waistband on the pants was ripped half loose from the body.

From the top of the dresser she got a needle and thread. A small pair of scissors she hung from a cord around her neck. In the rocking chair outside in the sun of the porch, she sat down with the torn top and pants blue-grey in her lap.

Through the french doors came the tail end of a familiar

record. Across the porch the garden rake stood in the yard near the bottom step. On the table under the window by the backdoor, potatoes from the garden were stacked waiting for washing. She mended silently, pulling the thread of her thoughts through the tired cloth.

Children rode down the street alongside the house ringing bicycle bells. The last song on the record player ended and shut off with a click. Far away she thought she could hear the inside roar of a shell. An apple dropped from the tree in the yard to the ground, and she remembered: rerunning an old film inside her head.

There had been a body, a life-size stuffed doll, hanging from the chimney, it was dressed like a scarecrow man: checked shirt, jeans and boots. People were hanging out the windows upstairs, laughing over loud music. The house was joined on either side with other houses. All the houses were bricked together in a block, each with its own slanting roof.

She had been depressed, full of long sighing breaths. She had gone to the bar with her roommates, and had still been inconvincably bored. She told them she was going home, and had started home alone. It was on her way home that she walked across the street to avoid the house a second time, it was on her way home that she had gone in.

And she entered something like a dream. A vision out of ancient history. A brawl scene, a mead bar. A barmaid pushed between bodies, feeling her way along, shouting. Bells tinkling from her wrists and ankles. Faces were everywhere, like black crows. The rooms swarmed.

All song and dance stopped. Everything, all eyes searching her, stood in split second suspension. A leaf eddied in from outside. She closed the door behind her.

The rooms were dim. A sweet smoke hung in the air, incense and tobacco. There was no one, nothing she recognized. The bass of the music pumped her chest, surging blood to her fingertips.

From the room to her right — couches pushed against either unwindowed wall — green, yellow and red pulsated to a grinding rhythm. To her left were the stairs going up. The kitchen straight ahead, was down a long, narrow hallway. Everywhere she turned there were bodies, masked mouths and drooling grins.

Either side of the hall called to her: a ghoul and a court jester stood in her way and, for a moment, would not let her pass. She merely smiled. She had had nothing to drink.

At the rim of the kitchen she leaned watching the tap drip. The painted voices laughed all around her. A drip filled the mug and the water overflowed the edge into the sink.

A fisherman stepped within her stare and caught her in conversation. A worm pinned to his jacket, flies on his hat. He enthralled her.

From the back porch came hoots of revelry. The noise overcame the conversation. They both looked ahead to separate things. She went to the door and looked out under the arms of two backs of shadows standing in the doorway. Outside, shapes of people gathered in a ring singing discussions through nasal ears. They were dressed in brown-black, large silver buckles and bells on black shoes. The focus of the growing mirth was a wooden half barrel, spilling with water. A common gypsy, Celtic harp laid to one side, his hair soaked with rivulets of effort, juggled three apples over his head. Two of the apples splashed, one after the other, into the barrel. The third apple he caught, neck outstretched, in his mouth, like a pink pig spread on a platter.

The circle cheered raucously. Through the fire shadows, a monk, untouched by the joy, stood watching, like a witch waiting to be burned.

The fisherman hooked her arm and she broke away from the tendrils of the scene. They sat on the couch, backs by the front door, in the organ beat light. On the other sofa, shadow pushed a fairy queen down into the cushions. Another couple, danced in front of them, captivated in each other's trance: a dark, silent pulse throbbed between them of the music, and of the light.

Sitting on the couch, the fisherman had told her ear how last season he'd felt more authentic when he lived on Kraft dinner alone, above the art gallery.

And she had told him of her dream of how she had been saved by a pumpkin's breath of being locked in a desert of rusty leaves and almond eyes.

And he had understood her exactly. He nodded his head repeatedly, and had allowed the glow from his eye to soften the strange room.

When the air became too oppressive, the lights too orange, the fisherman had walked her home.

It was all Hallow's Eve, and she had been wearing her pajamas.

EDITORIAL

What is the atmosphere on campus this year for those of us who experience and participate in gender politics? . . . And that includes all of us . . .

Here are just a few examples that have been brought to the attention of the Women's Centre Collective:

* People are asking how graphics of cave men in the act of clubbing a woman who they are fighting over can be used on campus posters publicizing a local friendship society.

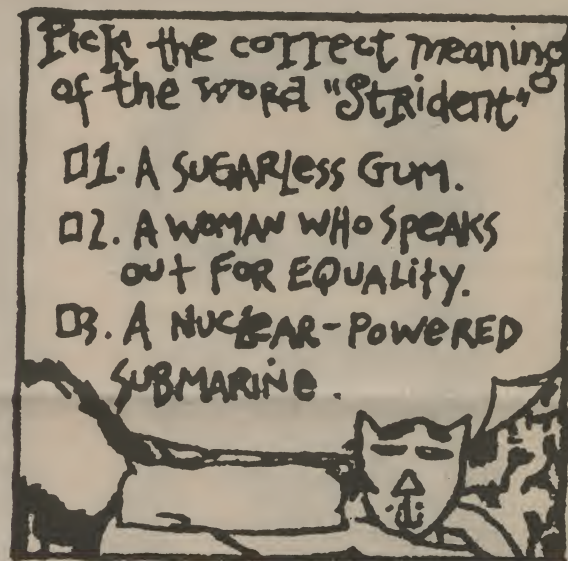
* A recent newspaper funded and produced by students from a faculty on campus contains numerous slurs against women and women's sexuality. While one excerpt withholds names of contributors, "To protect the guilty," the tone of another is distinctly fashioned after pornographic hate literature.

* Women students are becoming more vocal in expressing dismay toward professors who continue to lecture while using language that refers to men and male experiences as the curriculum standard.

* Certain faculties (which include high percentages of women students) celebrated this year's entry of first year students with pub crawls to bars featuring female strippers.

* Outside the women's locker room of the McKinnon building a looming poster warns women of the dangers of jogging around our campus past dark.

* On the positive side, however, this is the first year that pornography is not sold in the campus bookstore, and last April UVic students voted in the first majority and the highest percentage ever of women members on the Board of Directors. Changes are happening, and who knows what other good news we can add to the list *this* year!



Of the morning after, she now remembered very little. Only that she had slept well into the morning without waking. Her roommates had let her sleep. No vacuum cleaner buzz or foot nudging against the door. They thought that the fisherman leaving at dawn was her coming home. It wasn't till much later that they found out where she had been that night or where she had met the man she grew so quickly to love.

She wore the pajamas often then. Sometimes without thinking, sometimes for fun, for old times sake. She wore them up until the morning she awoke from a vision that the blue-grey flannel hung like an iron curtain around her body and she could no longer breathe.

She'd pushed them to the back of the middle drawer, she remembered now, the night the fisherman was sorting the silverware into mine and hers piles. Everything had shattered.

She stitched three times, one on top of the other, for a tack to finish the repair of the waistband. She cut the threads off with the small scissors from around her neck. The afternoon sun was still warm on her face and hands. In the yard, at the top of the apple tree, a group of starlings flocked and landed, squawking noisily, and in a second were gone.

In front of the rocking chair, she held out the pajamas to in-

spect her mending. The pocket was replaced, the waistband reunited with the body. The cat, at her shifting movements, jumped down off the rocking chair and ran ahead of her through the french doors into the house.

In the bedroom the middle drawer hung still opened. The bed, she now shared with someone else, remained resolutely tussled in the corner of the room. Her night clothes of the evening before were hurriedly flung in a ferrous heap on the wooden floor; their once brilliant colors fading to a similar hue, a blue-grey mirror image of before.

She folded the mended pajamas with the careful hands of an old and affectionate friend, and settled them back into the middle drawer, where they were safe and alone, enclosed and forgiven.

A familiar drone drove home-ward into the drive.

She closed the drawer with rushed resolution. She heard her heart beat. And looked up to the front door. And he was home.



NJMorris at Squeaky's Laundry

COMPUTER PROF SERRA: TRAIL BLAZING ON CAMPUS

by Elizabeth Loughran

"No daughter of mine is going to be an engineer!" was the bottom line handed down by her father while Professor Micaela Serra of UVic's Computer Science Department was growing up. Never mind that she was a grade 'A' student in math, physics and other science courses — and wanted to be an engineer.

Professor Serra says her father (an engineer himself), compromised with her on the relatively new field of computer science that has not developed a reputation as the ultimate career bastion for men — yet.

Reflecting on the varying degrees of sexual discrimination that exist within computer science and engineering, Serra explains, "looking back, I was angry then, but I think I may not have lasted . . . I think that the engineering body here is perhaps ten times better than any engineering body over all Canada . . . but it's far from perfect."

This year the Computer Science Department here at UVic falls under the jurisdiction of the Engineering Faculty and includes two women professors. A third female professor teaches mechanical engineering and together they make up almost eight percent of the faculty.

As a single parent, Professor Serra claims that if it wasn't for evening classes offered at certain universities, she wouldn't be where she is today. "You have to have a lot of commitment, but I couldn't have done it if both Toronto and Manitoba didn't have such evening courses."

The majority of part-time students on this campus are women; many of which are also single parents. Since Serra was hired by the Computer Science Department two years ago, she and only one other prof have be-

gun teaching evening classes required in the credit program.

Perhaps one main reason that Canada's roughly 10 percent female-participation rate in these fields drags so far behind the United States' rate of nearly 40 percent, is the absence of mandatory affirmative action. Serra claims, "It is being shown here in Canada that any formal voluntary affirmative action just doesn't work. It just doesn't give

gest difference if they (the teachers) started in grade 9 . . . to take girls and boys and divide them for math. For example, if you have an A+ in math, your probability of getting a boyfriend is much lower. A boy may want an intelligent girlfriend, but it's better if she's just one point below."

And Serra concludes that this pressure to underachieve carries through to adulthood for many

She also refers to a written rule that many universities have, including UVic, "When a female student goes into a male faculty member's office for consultation during office hours . . . the door has to stay open to prevent any (possible) sexual harassment . . . to protect both the woman and the faculty member. But on the other hand, if there are three students waiting outside in the corridor, and you feel

for something like professional engineering, where at the end I will be assured of a high-paid professional status and nobody touches me."

"The same reason I think that why a lot of women went into law and medicine. You know, if you're going to go through six years of harassment, at the end you're making a hundred thousand dollars."

Serra describes what can happen to a woman's tolerance level toward what is often subtle, yet persistent sexual discrimination, "The problem with some of the women in science and engineering — and it's not their fault — but after a while you do develop a very thick skin, and you are no longer sensitized. So if a woman comes up to you and says, 'How did you put up with that sort of comment?', you say, 'What comment?'"

"This is the same for me." The professor chuckles while considering her reputation as the department's feminist and her own reaction toward professors from Women Studies departments and publications such as *Ms. Magazine*, "These women are outrageous to me! And then I say no, they are not nuts. I am the one who after a while just takes (discrimination) for granted." *



Photo by E. Loughran

you the results."

She is happy to add, however, that here at UVic, "There has been strong encouragement from the Dean. It has sensitized people."

Serra contends that sexual streamlining in high schools lies at the root of the problem, as girls generally get redirected out of courses requiring mathematical and abstract thinking while in their early teens. Serra describes one of the ways in which girls must deal with additional pressures that boys do not have to face: "It would make the big-

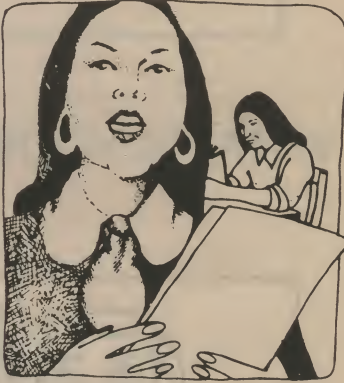
women. "Tell me how many marriages wouldn't have a tiny bit of a problem if all of a sudden she makes more money than he does? Systemic discrimination is just built in."

Serra relates this pattern to the difference between how female and male students in the Engineering Faculty interact amongst themselves and with their professors, "The men never have any problems about coming to knock on your door any time of the day, or asking questions in class. The women always do, and not just in my class."

a little insecure about your question, you don't want everybody else hearing."

"I talked to a few women undergraduates who have said, 'Here I come into this field . . . you find yourself sitting in a class of fifty people in which there are two women. They (the male students) tease you, you know, whatever harassment goes on. You may have a very thick skin — you may not.' They say, 'If I have to go through four or five years of this and listen to these sexist remarks or jokes or so on, I might as well go

SPEAKING OUT



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GAL'S NIGHT OUT



The Crystal Gardens was filled with Women the evening of Oct. 15 for Victoria's Gala Appreciation for Lesbians Night Out. This premier event featured a delicious buffet dinner, songs by a local singer-songwriter, and an exceptional theatrical performance-piece, followed by a dance.

The three act play, *Memoirs of Our Anisters*, was definitely the highlight of the evening. Drawn from the lives of lesbians in our own Canadian past, it was an eloquent re-enactment of per-

sonal herstory. The electric and empathetic repore with the audience created what one of the actresses later called, "Our best performance ever!"

The evening was highly successful — within 25 of being at the fire marshall's limit — with proceeds going to the organizing co-sponsors, Hot Flashes Coffee House, and Status of Women Action Group. Fun was had by all, and we send a very special thankyou to all the women past and present who made it possible for this long awaited event to happen.

Class Conscious

by Kate Braid

I put my hands on the table
right after you noticed the hammers
I wear for earrings.
An accidental gesture
sort of.
The hands that yield a hammer
I wanted to show you
so there'd be no illusions
about me
tough woman
tough hands.
I didn't want you to get the wrong idea
about me
looking so feminine in some parts.
What you see
my hands say for me
is what you get

I put my hands on the table
tentative
proud sort of
hoping you are one of the ones
who likes a working hand

and scared you're not

Lightwater

by Michael Andriesbyn

little Androgyn Particle-
Wave white-violet, an Iris
Dervish Bluefroth clear as
the mountain stream, glacier
Nourished Singing in trickles

Lover of the Sea-Mam
all echoes silken faience
Aquadynamic ancient Memories
muse celebration vociferous
Deep Strength-Slow Grace
passion gentle spark

After finding You This Time

for enu from kas

spiraling in arcturas vega altair
summer heat climbing the tilt
ecliptic approaching the constellation of my birth
arching to the third eastern dragon cycle
this life i go, waiting for the coll moon
mirror muin, and in the east, seven sisters
on the rise. i can hardly wait, patience
thin as an ethiopian, restless as aurora
zone ion jumps pulses quicken:
the change nears

Daycare Announcement:
Child Care Exchange.
Do you need extra time for
study, yourself? The Women's
Centre is setting up an informal
baby-sitting now! SUB 106 or
721-8353. Contact Fay.



QUOTE OF THE MONTH:

"Our society's greatest challenge
is for women to get over their low
self-esteem, and for men to get
over their arrogance; it is the same
problem." — Seer in Residence.

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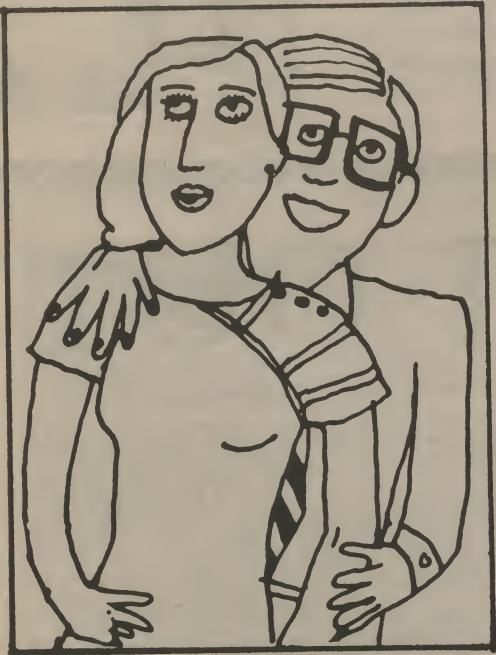
Women's Studies, Health, Sexuality, Biography,
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Non-fiction, Non-sexist Children's Books and more...
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BREAKING OUT OF
THE MOULD

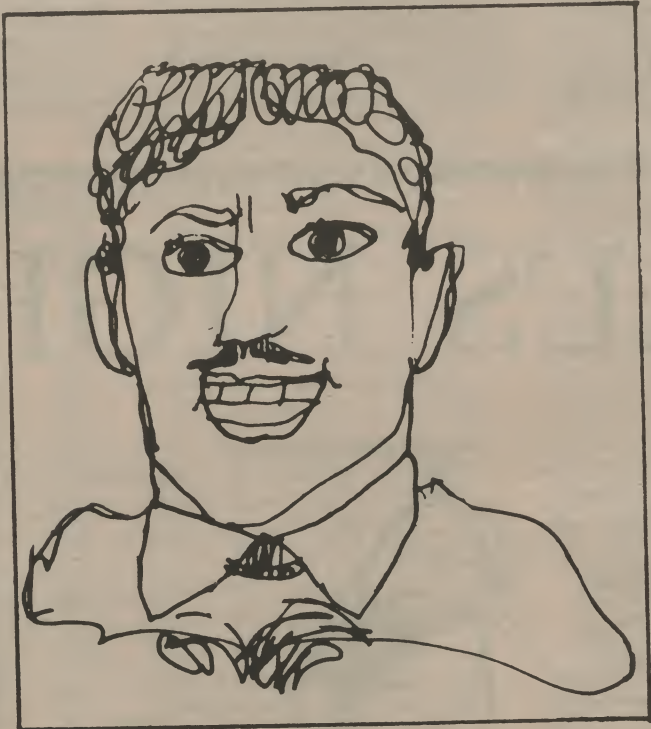


WHAT'S YOUR OPINION/ Can a woman successfully combine
career and family?



Both Bob and I feel that a woman
who has a career can do so only at
the expense of her husband and
children.

Bob is helping me to fully
understand this, emotionally as well
as intellectually, by dropping his
clothes in little piles around the
house, and by telling everyone that
my children have dry skin because I
neglect them.



I think, if women don't like the way
we run things here, they can go
back where they came from. That's
what I think.

by Nicole Hollander

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